

THE RICHMOND CLIMAX.

38th YEAR

RICHMOND, MADISON COUNTY, KENTUCKY, WEDNESDAY, MAY 23, 1912

NUMBER 49

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Interesting Letter From Former Madison Resident.

The interesting letter published below is from Mrs. C. D. Turner, formerly Miss Minnie Crandall, of Newby, this county. Mr. and Mrs. Turner moved to Earle, Arkansas, about three years ago. This popular couple have many relatives and friends in Madison, who will read with interest the following communication:

Earle, Ark., May 11, 1912
Mrs. John Allen,
Richmond, Ky.

Dear Jennie:—
"Backward, turn backward, O, Time in your flight,
"Make me a child again, just for to-night."

On receiving your letter in imagination, twenty years rolled away and I was a girl again down in Posey, receiving letters from you. Are you like Maude, requiring some great disaster before you find time to write? Charlie and Dorsey have gone to town to-day, and true to the habit of childhood, when left alone I want to get into some messiness or do something out of the ordinary. Let's hope writing to you will settle the demon of unrest. I presume Maude has told you how the water got one and one-half feet deep in our house, and Dorsey and I left for five days, came back as soon as it began falling, went from stairway in a boat to the steps of smoke house, how we cooked up there on heater until water got out of oven of cook stove and Charlie could get into kitchen in knee boots and do the cooking. While I was gone, he lived mostly on raw eggs, too busy to try to cook on heater as it took hustling to save the stock. Water began falling on the 22nd of April and by the 26th, I could walk on ties laid from dining room to kitchen and next day could wash floors and stay down stairs.

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stairs. The water fell rapidly and we began replanting garden and Charlie began putting in crop, then the second rise came, it is over one-fourth of garden and edges of yard, about ten or eleven acres of land is uncovered and that has been planted, but it still creeps in. The crest of wave reached Memphis Thursday, so we don't see why this don't begin to fall. We lost all garden, most of fruit trees, flowers, grass, three heads of cattle, two litters of pigs, and if this water don't go down soon, may lose crop, and yet our lot is easy compared to those nearer levees. You said you supposed the Titanic disaster was worse than this. The newspaper version of Titanic loss is worse, that's all. You know the South has no great newspapers, because the reporters are snobs, they chronicle only those events in which the rich are participants. Had this overflow occurred in the East or West, you would have had column after column of heartrending details of the lonely farmers rescued from tops of houses, barns, and trees, of the millions of heads of cattle and mules lost, of the sinking of boats, and overturning of houses with women and children clinging to roofs, just when help was in sight. But as it happened in the South, and most of the sufferers were poor whites and negroes, their tales of woe go untold. Why Charlie and Mr. Cook, with a negro man, rescued one family of whites, man, wife and eight children, who had lived for days with water several inches on floor, and when rescued lacked six inches of reaching bed rails. The man was lying flat on his back with a knee split open, and too lazy to have anything if he had been well. The woman came to me a few days later begging flour, meat and lard, saying her children were hungry, also milk for a two-months old baby which they were raising on canned milk, and it hadn't any for twenty-four hours. I had one of her children for days and took another. Anything in Titanic compared to that mother, seeing her children, starving and the suffering of that tiny baby? And yet this is only one of perhaps a thousand worse cases. From the bluff at St. Louis to the Gulf, 150,000 people are homeless, many of them having lost practically everything they had. The U. S. government is sending rations to 80,000, and right here is one of the greatest frauds ever perpetrated. Except in refugee camps, very few of the real sufferers ever received any government aid, the merchants and big men got it as it came in, in earload lots and gave it out to their tenants, who were not even in overflow, and then charged tenants for it. The agent of Crittenden Railroad is our authority, has bills to show how these merchants shipped it to negroes where there was no water, down his line. The negroes and poor whites around us failed to get any although they went again and again. One Illinois man went to get rations for his tenant, they told him they had none. He replied: "All right, I've kept my



J. WALTER WILSON, IMPERSONATOR.
At the Richmond Chautauque, July 1.

men through this overflow so far, and am still able to keep them, but this matter will be investigated." They hurriedly told him to help himself. The people on Titanic met death in a few hours, but these people must live on with the work and savings of a life time gone. It is easy to die compared to living on with hope gone. The Titanic buried their dead, these people their hopes, which do you think the worse? Besides, if loss of life could be compiled it would be much greater than 1,500, for many suffered so from exposure that death will result, and then think of the sickness and death that must result when water goes down. As for ourselves, personally, and our little settlement, we came out fine and thank the Lord, it is as well with us it is. We received many letters of sympathy and some offering help. While we didn't need any help, you can imagine how we appreciated the loving thoughts behind the offers. Even our banker here asked Charlie if he would need any money. All we need is water to recede in time to get crop in and good health. Tell John, when the water was so high, we thought of and spoke every day about how good a Kentucky hill would look. Charlie said if he just had one of them on his place, money couldn't buy the farm. We were offered a profit of \$2,300 on our place in March and refused it. I wish now we had sold as we could buy cheaper close to town. A St. Louis man has already bought \$100,000 worth of property from discouraged owners. Well, we aren't made of "give-up" stuff, we are sickers. While I hate it here now like sin, yet I

wouldn't sell for anything. It is said the whole U. S. could live off the products of St. Francis Basin, the Mississippi Delta, the Louisiana Basin and the Lower Arkansas country, and yet for lack of men in Congress with "backbone" enough to get money sufficient to protect these, the richest agricultural regions in the world, lie a watery waste. We pay sixteen cents an acre levee tax in addition to other taxes, too; but any permanent good must come through great loss of life and property, so let's hope Congress will wake up. The crying need of the South is Men! Men! who won't sell out and are seeking the good of the many instead of the individual. Shall I tell you what has helped sustain me in this reconstruction period—which is worse than overflow? It is from a play, "The Chanticleer." The cock when he found that the day dawned without his crowing, said: "Well, the soul needs a faith, however, oft that faith is slain." "But, how will you find new courage now that you doubt your work?" asked the pheasant hen. "By working," replied the cock. So it is by working, faith in our work is restored and we begin again to repair damages and erect on the graves of buried hopes, a new hope and a new faith in this great devastated land.

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